



HOWARD COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
ELlicott CITY HISTORIC DISTRICT ■ LAWYERS HILL HISTORIC DISTRICT
3430 Court House Drive ■ Ellicott City, Maryland 21043

Administered by the Department of Planning and Zoning

VOICE 410-313-2350
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July Minutes

Thursday, July 6, 2017; 7:00 p.m.

The sixth meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission was held on Thursday, July 6, 2017 in the C. Vernon Gray room located at 3430 Court House Drive, Ellicott City, MD 21043. Ms. Tennor moved to approve the June minutes. Mr. Roth seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.

Members present: Allan Shad, Chair; Eileen Tennor, Vice-Chair; Drew Roth, Secretary; Bruno Reich; Erica Zoren

Staff present: Samantha Holmes, Beth Burgess, Dan Bennett, Lewis Taylor, and Yvette Zhou

PLANS FOR APPROVAL

Consent Agenda

1. HPC-17-42 – 8120 Main Street, Ellicott City

Regular Agenda

2. HPC-17-40 – 8307 Main Street, Ellicott City
3. HPC-17-41 – 7912 Savage Guilford Road, HO-41
4. HPC-17-43 – 8398 Main Street, Ellicott City
5. HPC-17-44 – 8307 Main Street, Ellicott City
6. HPC-17-38 – 3646 Fels Lane, Ellicott City, HO-979 (continued from June)
7. HPC-17-46 – 3646 Fels Lane, Ellicott City, HO-979

CONSENT AGENDA

HPC-17-42 – 8120 Main Street, Ellicott City

Certificate of Approval for exterior alterations.

Applicant: Kelli Myers

Background & Scope of Work: This property is located in the Ellicott City Historic District. According to SDAT the building dates to 1890. The Applicant proposes to install a shed style awning on the front of the building. The awning will be Oz Green, to match the color of the building façade. The awning will be 23 feet wide with a 3 foot drop and 33-inch projection to clear the nearby telephone pole. There will not be any graphics on the awning. The framework of the awning will be corrosion resistant zinc galvanized “polymer and chromate coated structural steel tubing.”

The application explains that the building is located on the sunny side of the street and that a significant amount of heat is coming through the large single pane windows causing high utility bills. The application states that merchandise displayed in the windows are getting faded and damaged.

Staff Comments: Chapter 6.L recommends “when installing awning or canopies, use shed-style awning that are scaled appropriately for the building size and window spacing. Awnings should be made of non-reflective canvas or another strong fabric, in a color compatible with the building façade.” The proposed awning will be a shed style and the color will be compatible with the building façade.

Chapter 6.L recommends against awnings “that obscure character-defining features of the building.” The rendering shows the awning sitting directly below the cornice line. If this is an accurate representation of where the awning will be installed, then the cornice, which is a character defining feature of the building, will not be obscured.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends Approval as submitted.

Testimony: Mr. Shad asked if anyone in the audience wished to present testimony. There was no one in the audience who wanted to testify. Mr. Reich asked if the proposed canopy replaced an existing one shown in the historic photograph. Ms. Holmes said no, historically there was a canopy, but not in recent years.

Motion: Mr. Roth moved to approve the application as submitted. Ms. Tennor seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.

REGULAR AGENDA

HPC-17-40 – 8307 Main Street, Ellicott City

Certificate of Approval for exterior alterations.

Applicant: Chris Eatough, Howard County Office of Transportation

Background & Scope of Work: This building is located in the Ellicott City Historic District. According to SDAT the building dates to 1930. The Applicant proposes to install a bike share station in a parking spot in front of 8307 Main Street where the Su Casa store is located. The station will contain 9 docks/bikes and will be 18 feet 5 inches long by 7 feet wide. The bike frames will be white. The station will contain a kiosk with a solar panel mounted on top, which powers the bikes. Examples of comparable bike stations are shown in Figures 1 and 2.



Figure 1 - Example of bike share station



Figure 2 - Example of bike share station



Figure 3 - Proposed location for Ellicott City bike share station

Staff Comments: Staff is in favor of providing a bike share station in Ellicott City, but needs to consider the consistency of the Guidelines when deciding the location and the impact of the solar panels on Main Street and the Historic District.

In 2009 the Commission adopted Guidelines for the 'Use of Solar Panels and Other Solar Devices in Historic Districts.' These Guidelines are generally written from the perspective of being used on a structure and not altering historic features. However, the Solar Panel Guidelines do address detached solar arrays. The Guidelines recommend, "locate detached arrays of solar panels and other solar devices at a historic site in the rear or side yard if the arrays are not highly visible from the public streets and do

not detract from other major character-defining aspects of the site. The location of detached solar arrays should also consider visibility from adjacent properties, which shall be reduced to the extent possible while still maintaining solar access.” The proposed solar panel, as it will be located in front of the historic building, will be highly visible from the public right of way. However, the building at 8307 Main Street has a parapet wall on the front façade, so the actual roof is not visible in this location. An alternative location for the solar panels, if feasible, could be on the roof, with the lines run down the side of the building where other equipment is located to connect to the bike station.

The request for the bike share station does not easily fit within the Guidelines. Chapter 10.B addresses off-street parking, and the bicycles could be considered an alternative type of parking. Chapter 10.B recommends, “locate new parking facilities to minimize the impact on historic buildings and streetscapes. Design parking areas, curb cuts and driveways to be no larger or wider than necessary to accomplish their function.” The proposed bike station will fit into an existing parking space, which complies with the Guidelines as it will not be larger than necessary to accomplish the function and will minimize the impact on the historic building as it will not be much different than if a vehicle was parked in the space.



Figure 4 - Facade of 8307 Main Street

Staff has requested additional information regarding the overall size of the kiosk and solar panels.



Figure 5 - Location of proposed Ellicott City bike share station

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends Approval of the installation of the bike station but recommends an alternate energy source be considered for this location, or recommends an alternate location for the entire bike system be identified, where solar panels would be more appropriate. The additional information on the kiosk is still needed in order to make a recommendation.

Testimony: Mr. Shad swore in Mr. Chris Eatough and Mr. Philip Nichols. Mr. Shad asked if there were any additions or corrections to the Staff comments or application. Mr. Eatough said the new County bike share program just launched with seven stations and seventy bicycles, primarily in the Columbia downtown area. The program offers the public 24/7 on demand bike use. The County would like to expand the program and add two more stations, one in historic Ellicott City and one at the George Howard Building, in September.

The area in front of the Su Casa store was identified as an ideal location, because of its high visibility and easy accessibility. The County will formalize an agreement with the property owner to use the location. Mr. Eatough understood the concerns about solar panels in the Historic District and he said the bike station can be plugged in to the electrical grid for use without solar panels. He also said that the proposed station is a seven-dock station, instead of the nine-dock previously noted. Mr. Nichols showed a photo of a thirteen-dock station that is currently on the corner of Broken Land Parkway and Little Patuxent Parkway, to show the Commission the product the County is using. Ms. Burgess asked if the station in the photo is without a solar panel. Mr. Nichols said correct. Ms. Holmes asked for the dimensions of the kiosk. Mr. Eatough said the kiosk is around seven feet tall. He did not have an exact specification on the width, but said the kiosk would fit within the 18 foot 5 inch width of the bike share station, along with the bicycles. Mr. Eatough said the kiosk is about three feet wide.

Ms. Tennor said the challenge is that the bike stations need high visibility within the Historic District, yet its designs are too modern. Mr. Bennett said two handicapped parking spaces may be lost in the proposed station location. Mr. Nichols said the property owner was aware of this potential loss and will accommodate the spaces elsewhere.

Mr. Roth asked if the solar panels served as the power source for the bikes. Mr. Eatough said the station itself needs power for the docking mechanism and the bikes have an electric assist feature.

Mr. Reich asked where can one safely ride bikes on Main Street. Mr. Eatough said the purpose of the bike program is for travel between the George Howard Building and Main Street, Ellicott City. The electric assist bikes are suitable for navigating hills around the Historic District. The traffic is low and roadways are wide enough along Rogers Avenue, Church Road, and Ellicott Mills Drive to accommodate cyclists. Mr. Nichols said the Trolley Trail offered recreational opportunities for the bikes as well.

Mr. Reich said for the past 50 years people were opposed to the overhead electric wires in historic Ellicott City, which is why he opposed solar panels. He said although the solar panels are greener and sustainable, the bikes should be connected to the electric grid. Mr. Reich said the kiosk's height should be kept low and visually unobtrusive, since the proposed location offers ideal vista views of downtown. He said the installation of a tall modern bike station was not desirable within the Historic District.

Mr. Shad asked if there was any one in the audience who wished to testify. There was no one who wanted to testify.

Mr. Reich asked if there were other kiosk design options. Mr. Eatough said the County is under contract with one vendor who offers the existing design, but he can discuss with the vendor the possibility, if any, to minimize the size of the kiosk.

Ms. Tennor asked what happens if one station has more bikes than it can dock after riders return them to different stations. Mr. Eatough said the kiosks are monitored full time by a contractor who will move the bikes among stations to make sure the bikes are evenly distributed.

Mr. Roth asked about the bike's battery life. Mr. Eatough said a single charge will last about 30 miles and explained that the bikes will be charging in between use when they are docked at the station. The electric assist was the main consideration for hilly areas in Ellicott City.

Mr. Roth asked who the primary riders will be. Mr. Eatough said mainly Howard County employees from the George Howard Building going to and from Main Street. The program is also ideal for people who work and live on Main Street. Mr. Roth said if the station was installed in a parking lot, it would increase ridership of tourists who park their cars in the parking lot. Mr. Eatough said the primary function will be for people who work and live around historic Ellicott City.

Ms. Tennor asked if the stations are permanent fixtures. Mr. Eatough said the stations can be removed easily because the stations are anchored to the ground with bolts and there is no excavating involved.

Ms. Burgess asked about the possibility that the advertisement space on the kiosks can be purchased by the Ellicott City Partnership, or other organizations, to feature a map of Ellicott City rather than independent advertisers. Mr. Eatough said the space is available, but the cost still needs to be determined by the vendor. Ms. Burgess said since the advertisement can change throughout the year, the Commission would consider that to be a sign, which requires approval. Ms. Tennor suggested that the ad space could be reserved for public information use rather than private use. Ms. Burgess agreed it would be helpful for wayfinding. Mr. Nichols said if smaller kiosks can be found, it may eliminate the advertisement board on the station all together.

Mr. Shad asked if just the rental box can be installed without the kiosk. Mr. Eatough said he will check with the vendor. Ms. Zoren said the kiosk is above human scale, which visually blocks pedestrian orientation on Main Street. Perhaps limiting the height of the kiosk to four feet is better.

Mr. Reich asked if there is a touchscreen on the kiosk. Mr. Eatough said the proposed kiosk will not have a touch screen, although others do. He explained that users can download an application on their phones or register online for a key fob to use the bikes. The kiosks serve an informational purpose, with a map of the area and instructions on how to use the bikes. The informational material is printed, it is not digital.

Mr. Taylor said each advertisement would need to be approved by the Commission, since it is considered a sign.

Mr. Eatough asked if the vendor can install just the gray box containing the power source without the kiosk above, would the Commission approve it or will a separate application need to be made. Mr. Reich said the Commission can approve it, if it is only the gray box. Mr. Bennett said the gray box may attract ad stickers or graffiti. Mr. Eatough said the vendor will maintain the stations for cleanliness.

Mr. Reich said the proposed location is a good open area with high visibility at the entrance of the Main Street encouraging people to use bikes.

Mr. Taylor asked if the Applicants are withdrawing the request to use solar panels. Mr. Nichols said yes.

Motion: Mr. Reich moved to approve the bike station with the base unit of the kiosk, as shown in the photo provided by the Applicant, and if the kiosk needs to be more than the base unit, then the

Applicant will return to the Commission for approval. Ms. Tennor seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.

HPC-17-41 – 7912 Savage Guilford Road, HO-41

Tax credit pre-approval.

Applicant: Nicole Taylor

Background & Scope of Work: This property is not located in a historic district, but is listed on the National Register of Historic Places since 1978 and is listed on the Historic Sites Inventory as HO-41, the Commodore Joshua Barney House. The inventory form indicates the house was constructed circa 1811-1817. This property also has a Maryland Historical Trust (MHT) easement on it. The Applicant has recently purchased the property, which has been bank-owned for several years and neglected as a result. While vacant, the house was not properly winterized and pipes burst, causing a lot of interior damage. The previous property owner also made alterations to the house without MHT approval (which is required because of the easement) and some of these alterations have caused problems in the house that the current Applicant/new owner is seeking to fix. The Applicant seeks tax credit pre-approval for tax credits 20.112 and 20.113. There is a large addition on the side/rear of the property that is not eligible for tax credits as it is not historic. The original, historic house consists of the three-bay wide brick structure and a portion of the side addition, which was later enlarged. The proposed work includes:

- 1) The previous owner added a brick patio to the front of the house that is causing water to infiltrate into the foundation and walls of the house and has damaged the plaster on the interior. The Applicant proposes to trench and pipe water away from the front of the house where the brick patio adjoins the house. The Applicant will then replace/repair any loose or missing bricks.



Figure 6 - Brick patio causing interior damage



Figure 7 - Interior plaster damage from front brick patio

- 2) Prep, paint and repair as needed the existing shutters on the building. The color will remain black. Staff finds the shutters on the front façade of the house and sides of the brick portion are eligible for the tax credit (see Figure 8).
- 3) Repair the peeling paint on the brick portion of the house and repaint to match the existing color (see Figure 10).
- 4) Replace broken glass panes in various windows throughout the house. The windows located in the historic portion of the house are eligible for the work.
- 5) Repair the light fixtures on the front of the house (see Figure 9).
- 6) Repair a burnt wire on the side of the building (non-historic part of house).
- 7) Replace modern dormer window in the upstairs with a wood window to match the historic window on the opposite side of the house as required by MHT (see Figure 11 and 12).



Figure 8 - Damaged shutter



Figure 9 - Damaged light fixture



Figure 10 - Peeling paint



Figure 11 - Modern dormer window to be replaced



Figure 12 - Historic dormer window; the modern gable window will match this window

The following work will take place in the interior of the building:

- 8) Repair damage caused from a plumbing leak in the foyer (see Figures 13 and 14).
- 9) Repair all broken radiators and refinish the wood floors that were damaged from the leaking radiators (see Figure 15 and 17).
- 10) Repair damaged plaster walls throughout the historic portion of house (see Figure 16).
- 11) Repair broken baseboard heating units.
- 12) Repair ceiling damage from an upstairs bathroom pipe that burst.
- 13) Spray joists in basement for mold and mildew and repair damaged plaster walls.



Figure 13 - Damaged foyer ceiling from burst pipe



Figure 14 - Damaged foyer ceiling



Figure 15 - Damaged wood floors



Figure 16 - Damaged plaster walls



Figure 17 - Broken radiator

Staff Comments: This house is eligible for Howard County historic property tax credits because it is listed on the Historic Sites Inventory as HO-41. The proposed work complies with the Section 20.112 tax credit criteria as the exterior work includes the “repair or replacement of exterior features of the structure” and “work that is necessary to maintain the physical integrity of the structure with regard to safety, durability, or weatherproofing.” The Applicant has to repair the house to the standards of the Maryland Historical Trust because the Trust holds an easement on this property, so this application consists of repair work, rather than replacement. The proposed work complies with the Section 20.113 tax credit

criteria as the proposed restoration and rehabilitation is “in accord with the U.S. Secretary of the Interior’s Standards and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings.” For example, the proposed work complies with Standard 6, “deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.”

The expenses for this property will be over the \$5,000 required by Section 20.113 of the County Code, but there is the possibility that the restoration may not trigger the property to be re-assessed, in which case the 20.113 tax credit may not be applicable, but that is unknown as this time.

Staff finds Items 1-7 qualify for the Section 20.112 tax credit. While Item 6 is located on a non-historic part of the house, the faulty wiring could result in a fire that would in turn damage the historic portion of the house. Staff finds Items 1-13 qualify for the 20.113 tax credit.

There were other items referenced in the application that dealt with the non-historic addition to the house and are not applicable for the tax credit.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends 20.112 tax credit pre-approval for Items 1-7 and 20.113 tax credit pre-approval for Items 1-13.

Testimony: Mr. Shad swore in Ms. Nicole Taylor and Mr. James Taylor. Mr. Shad asked if there were any additions or corrections to the Staff comments or application. Ms. Taylor said most of the repair costs are rolled into the renovation loan. She explained that many crucial repairs like roof leaks and plumbing will be done immediately while secondary items like refinishing wood floors will be done later while they are occupying the house. The goal is to make the house in good livable condition for her family.

Mr. Shad asked if there was any one in the audience who wished to testify. Mr. Fred Dorsey said yes.

Mr. Shad swore in Mr. Fred Dorsey. Mr. Dorsey is the President of Preservation Howard County. He explained that since 2014, the Joshua Barney House has been on the organization’s endangered list as the Bank neglected the maintenance of the house under its ownership. Mr. Dorsey contacted the bank many times and he also contacted MHT, without success. He recommended MHT have the Bank bring the property into compliance with the easement violation, so the burden would not pass to the next owner. Unfortunately, MHT did not have the staff capacity to address the violation. Mr. Dorsey assembled historical contexts for realtors to provide to prospective buyers after he learned realtors were not providing adequate information about the property. Mr. Dorsey looks forward to removing the house from the endangered list. He is very excited about the new owners and is in full support of their proposed work.

Ms. Tennor asked about the installation of a new metal, French style door in the garage area that did not seem historic. Ms. Holmes said not all of the house was historic and that item was located in a non-historic portion of the home.

Ms. Zoren wanted to know what was causing the leak at the brick patio. Mr. James Taylor said the patio is tilting towards the house. He said there is a non-porous concrete pad under the bricks which directs the water into the house. Ms. Zoren was unsure if the trench drain would be sufficient to solve the problem versus constructing a trench drain and grading the land to slope away from the house.

Ms. Tennor said MHT commented that the brick walkway was not original, and asked if removal was required. Ms. Taylor said MHT noted the brick walkway was causing water leaking into the house, but did not comment about it being historically inaccurate or say that it needed to be removed. Ms. Taylor did not want to remove the walkway yet due to the cost of removal.

Mr. Shad asked if the Applicants were clear on what MHT required to bring the easement violation into compliance. Ms. Taylor said MHT said if something is replaced same for same then no approval is needed, which is what they are doing currently. Mr. James Taylor noted secondary items, such as staining the floor will be done later. Ms. Taylor said MHT recommended the house be inspected and determine why water is going into the house, which could be due to the grading. Ms. Taylor said MHT's violation concerns were with the gazebo and the awning, but they were removed by the Bank. The remaining items, like rebuilding the historic dormer window, were secondary concerns which Ms. Taylor will work on throughout the year.

Ms. Holmes said for the assessment tax credit, the expenses must be \$5,000.00 or more, but it is possible SDAT will not register this work. A building permit of \$100,000 or more triggers a notice to SDAT, but since some of the proposed work is in kind repair, a building permit may not be required which will not put this on SDAT's radar. Mr. James Taylor said he already applied to have the property value reassessed to be in line with current market value, which amounts to a \$300,000 difference.

Ms. Holmes asked the HPC if there is any work that may be eligible for tax credit 20.113 that may also be applicable to tax credit 20.112 regarding safety, durability and weather proofing. Ms. Tennor said all the window repairs would be eligible. Ms. Zoren said the spraying of joists in the basement for mold and mildew. Mr. Lewis Taylor said repairing the damaged radiator for proper climate control to preserve the structure. Mr. Roth recalled a recent approval of an air conditioning (AC) unit. Ms. Zoren said the case was property specific, because the AC unit never existed before in the structure. Installing the AC unit helps with humidity control, which improved the integrity of the house. She said items 9, 11 and 13 also qualified.

Motion: Mr. Roth moved to approve the application items of one through seven, eleven and thirteen under Section 20.112 for tax credits. Mr. Roth moved to approve items one through thirteen for Section 20.113 tax credits. Mr. Reich seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.

HPC-17-43 – 8398 Main Street, Ellicott City, HO-340

Advisory Comments/Pre-Application Advice

Applicant: Ed Lilley, Howard County Historical Society

Background & Scope of Work: This property is located in the Ellicott City Historic District. According to the Historic Sites Inventory form (HO-340), the building dates to 1840 and was the original courthouse. The Applicant seeks Advisory Comments/Pre-Application Advice for the installation of signage documenting the history of the African American community located on Fels Lane in Ellicott City. This area is now Parking Lot F at the corner of Main Street and Ellicott Mills Drive.

The Applicant has provided renderings of a three-panel cluster upright unit, in which each panel can be lined up or slightly offset. Each panel is 36 inches wide and 48 inches tall (see Figure 18). The Applicant has shown a location opposite of the existing Underground Railroad sign, across the pathway from the historic original courthouse building (see Figures 19 and 20).

Staff Comments: Chapter 11.D of the Guidelines provides recommendations for the use of “traffic, directional and other public signage.” Chapter 11.D explains, “the use of a unified, appropriate design for these signs (including the supporting poles and hardware) would reinforce Ellicott City’s identity as a historic district. Combined with a program to identify locations where signs will be most effective and to eliminate unnecessary signs, such a unified sign program would reduce some of the clutter that detracts from the historic character of Ellicott City’s streetscapes.” The proposed signage style does match the other historical signs in the area, which complies with the Guidelines since there will be a consistency in the design.

There is no formal wayfinding program in Ellicott City, although in recent years DPZ had applied for grant funds to tackle this issue, but was not awarded the grant. The Ellicott City Master Plan process is now beginning and wayfinding is an issue that will be addressed. The current sign styles are dated and newer, fresher, more engaging sign styles are needed.



Figure 18 - Proposed signs



Figure 19 - Proposed sign location



Figure 21 - Aerial view of site



Figure 20 - Alternate view of proposed location



Figure 22 - Front facade of historic courthouse

Chapter 11.D recommends, “use directional and informational signs conservatively, in locations that will maximize their effectiveness. Limit the number of freestanding poles to minimize streetscape clutter.” Staff recognizes that the proposed location makes sense, as it orients the viewer to the historic photographs that may be on the sign. However, Staff is concerned that the proposed signs are quite large and detract from the building by obscuring its view. Staff finds the history of the Fels Lane community is very important and suggests looking at other ways of designing interpretative signage. There has been a lot of discussion over the years about alterations to Parking Lot F and Staff is interested to see what recommendations the Master Plan produces. Staff also finds the proposed signage could be a good project for future grants as the setting around the courthouse and log cabin is a blank slate that could be improved. A few ideas, beyond the standard proposed signage, that Staff has identified are shown below (please note these are just ideas from other locations and are not necessarily appropriate for Ellicott City, but represent possibilities beyond standard signage).



Figure 23 - Ideas for alternate styles of signage



Figure 24 - Ideas for alternate styles of signage



Figure 25 - Ideas for alternate styles of signage



Figure 26 - Ideas for alternate styles of signage

Testimony: Mr. Shad asked if there are any additions to the Staff comments. Mr. Ed Lilley said he was open to suggestions.

Mr. Reich asked if the Historical Society will pay for the signs. Mr. Lilley said yes, along with other designated funds for African-American projects.

Mr. Reich wanted to know the Applicant's thoughts about Staff's alternative sign ideas. Mr. Lilley said he is open to different ideas.

Ms. Zoren said the example signs have a lower height. She explained that the lower height of the example signs is important to preserving the visual vistas of the historic structures. She said signs that are waist height would be more appropriate and she liked the design shown in Figure 24.

Ms. Tennor asked the purpose of displaying a lot of content on the signs. Mr. Lilley said people tend to favor consolidated information, rather than going to separate places to obtain it. Mr. Lilley said that because of the extent of information that he would like to provide to the public, a larger size sign is needed. He said the 36 x 48 inch panels would be preferred.



Figure 27 - Ideas for alternate styles of signage

Mr. Roth asked if the proposed size could be more in line with the size and shape the Underground Railroad sign already on display. Mr. Lilley said it may be possible, but five or six signs of that size would be needed to convey the same information. Ms. Tennor asked if the information on the signs can be edited to be more consolidated. Mr. Lilley said it is possible, although the content will be determined by the size of the sign. Mr. Reich asked if the signs will be about the Fels Lane neighborhood or the Underground Railroad. Mr. Lilley said the signs will be about the Fels Lane community that no longer exists.

Mr. Roth said having more interesting content would benefit visitors. Ms. Tennor asked if there will be a website for people who want more information. Mr. Lilley said a website is a possibility. Ms. Tennor agreed with the other Commissioners that the height of the proposed signs is too tall.

Ms. Burgess said the Ellicott City Master Plan is in development and there could be a lot of changes taking place over the next several years, which could impact the location and design of the signs.

Mr. Roth said Mr. Lilley could use a series of smaller signs along the edge of Parking Lot F to draw the same interest without the intrusive height of the proposed signs.

Mr. Reich said the signs could be spread out along the grass area to be less intrusive. Ms. Zoren asked if smaller scale signs, with prioritized information, along with supporting brochures with extended information close by would work. Mr. Lilley was unsure if people will spend the time to read brochures.

Ms. Tennor recommended breaking out the content into smaller units and having a theme with brief text and good images that draw people, rather than a larger sign. Mr. Lilley said he will look at other alternatives.

The Commission recommended the use of smaller scale signs with consolidated information.

Motion: There was no motion as the request was for Advisory Comments.

HPC-17-44 – 8307 Main Street, Ellicott City,
Certificate of Approval for exterior alterations.
Applicant: Kate Ansari

Background & Scope of Work: This building is located in the Ellicott City Historic District. According to SDAT the building dates to 1930. The Applicant seeks retroactive approval for the following alterations:

- 1) Installation of non-skid gray patio floor.
- 2) Ten rectangular gray planters that act as a boundary for the patio space.
- 3) A non-masonry fireplace that acts as a boundary for the patio space.

The application states that these items are non-permanent and are movable/removeable. The application states, “all design elements are on-permanent and can be removed seasonally, i.e., at the end of traditional wedding season during the winter.”



Figure 28 - Existing patio area



Figure 29 - Existing fireplace



Figure 30 - Existing patio area



Figure 31 - Plastic patio flooring material



Figure 32 - Existing patio area

Staff Comments: The application compares these alterations to those listed as temporary in the Guidelines, which include lawn ornaments, mailboxes and above ground swimming pools that are dismantled each year. The items listed in the Guidelines give leeway for holiday decorations and pools that are found in rear yards of residential neighborhoods within Ellicott City. While it may be possible to remove these items at the end of the traditional wedding season, they would remain in place the majority of the year (as opposed to the above ground pools, which would only be out for about 3 months out of the year). Staff finds that any item that would be visible for the majority of a year does not qualify as temporary and that these alterations should be done with as much care to material and design as any other alteration to a historic structure.

Chapter 9 of the Guidelines provides recommendations on “Landscape and Site Elements”. Chapter 9.D states, “The most appropriate design and materials for new walls, driveway and other features depend on the specific context. As a rule, they should be simple in design...Simple designs will be consistent with historic Ellicott City structures and help new elements to blend with their context...Whenever possible, the materials used should be those used historically in the particular area of the district, especially for features that will be visible from a public way.” Chapter 9.D also states, “patios and walkways can be of a variety of materials. Brick and stone are common.”

Chapter 9.D recommends, “construct new site features using materials compatible with the setting and with nearby historic structures, particularly for features visible from a public way” and “construct new terraces or patios visible from a public way from brick, stone or concrete pavers design to look like indigenous stone.” The plastic gray interior garage flooring that has been put down as a patio does not comply with the Guidelines and is not compatible with the historic setting. The flooring half covers the painting of parking spaces, and overall creates an undesirable look, which detracts from the historic setting. If a patio is desired, it should be properly constructed with natural materials to match those in the vicinity. For example, on this property along Main Street, granite cobblestones were used as a paving material. This would be an appropriate material, as it was historically used on a paving material and has been used on-site, through an approved application. The fireplace appears to be constructed out of concrete blocks and does not appear to be readily movable. Additionally, the property owner was approved to construct a built-in stone patio using stone to match the retaining walls. The fireplace that has instead been installed does not match this approval and does not comply with the Guideline recommendations on the use of materials. Chapter 9.D states, that “concrete block walls are not suitable for older homes or for highly visible locations.” This guideline is in reference to retaining walls, but is applicable to the fireplace as well.

The Applicant also proposes to relocate the two parking spaces that will be lost, however one of them, possibly 1.5 of the space, is shown on County property and not the Applicant’s property. The Applicant must stay within the property boundaries of 8307 Main Street.

While planters typically do not require approval unless they are bolted to the ground, the planters that are being used in this scenario are essentially creating a fence/walled area. A few large planters may be appropriate by the entrance of the venue but the intrusion of planters in the parking lot not only visually blocks the adjacent storefront but also causes public confusion on whether this area is a patio or a parking lot. The Commission has already reviewed and approved plans for this area that consist of the creation of a courtyard with a stone wall and fireplace. The Applicant may proceed with these approvals, subject to other approvals that may be required by different County agencies. However, the alterations that have taken place for the existing, non-approved patio do not comply with the Guidelines.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends Denial of the application as submitted.

Testimony: Mr. Shad swore in Ms. Kate Ansari. Mr. Shad asked why the Applicant was seeking retroactive approval, especially since Ms. Ansari has been before the Commission before. Ms. Ansari said the landlord should have installed the approved courtyard patio, but will not due to a neighboring business owner who did not want any permanent fixtures obstructing their customer’s access. Ms. Ansari said she booked fifty weddings with the promise of outdoor space. Ms. Ansari said the landlord advised her that no approval was necessary for the patio since it was temporary.

Ms. Ansari said the anti-slip patio floor provides a more stable area for guests, since the asphalt pavement below is uneven. The temporary patio can be disassembled and removed in a few hours. The planters are removable as well, but it becomes a financial burden if they must be removed and stored after each event. Ms. Ansari is requesting temporary use during the wedding season, which is typically between May and November. Ms. Ansari said she was willing to remove the patio, planters and fireplace, if there are gaps in between reservations when the venue is not used.

Ms. Tennor asked if the patio approved last February infringed on parking spaces. Ms. Burgess said it did, but it was the owner's private property. The current proposed work infringement is a different footprint and extends onto County property. Ms. Ansari said the patio is all on the owner's property. However, the parking space installed by the landlord for the business next door is on County property. Ms. Burgess said this area needs to be clear to the public whether this area is public space, private property, a parking lot or a patio area and by placing flooring directly over the asphalt, it is unclear what this use is for on the day to day. Ms. Burgess said she was concerned to have a patio infringing on a handicapped parking space.

Ms. Zoren asked where the location of the patio approved in February was in relation to the current proposed patio. Ms. Ansari said the approved design from February was along the wall along with the approved stone fireplace in the corner of the new wall and wall along the river.

Ms. Zoren was against the gray plastic flooring and recommended alternative materials such as scored concrete pavers to better define the space. Ms. Zoren said the owner should improve the property by using a patio surface material that is drivable by cars rather than using a temporary plastic floor.

Ms. Tennor asked where the planters are currently stored. Ms. Ansari said the planters are put along the perimeter of the building then wheeled to the patio area during an event. Ms. Ansari said if pavers are installed, parts of the patio will extend into existing parking spaces, unless the patio size is reduced, but then the patio will be too small for use.

Ms. Holmes reminded the Commission how this case would set a precedent. There have been many stages, patio, and planter requests throughout last year. This proposed location is highly visible from the public way and the impact will be huge. Mr. Shad said he was concerned that the current patio is completely different from the design approved in February and violates the Zoning Code, and he recommended Ms. Ansari to further discuss resolutions with the landlord.

Mr. Roth said the Commission cannot approve the use of the plastic patio and the use of the planters as a fence to mark the area. Ms. Ansari asked how long could she use the planters. Mr. Taylor said the Commission is not in control of zoning enforcement and they cannot answer that question.

Mr. Reich asked what is underneath the plastic patio. Ms. Burgess said asphalt, and reiterated that the issue is not allowing a plastic flooring material.

Mr. Shad reminded the Applicant that any design changes would need to come back to the Commission for approval.

Mr. Taylor said to Ms. Ansari that one option would be immediate removal of the patio and planters, and return with an alternative solution for future approval. Mr. Reich asked if this case would qualify under the Minor Alteration Process, and Ms. Holmes said no due to its complexity. Mr. Taylor said the Commission could allow the Applicant to withdraw.

Mr. Shad asked if there was any one in the audience who wished to testify. Mr. Shad swore in Brianna Sanden, who asked if the current request can be denied, reverting back to the original approval. Mr. Shad said it would not be necessary. Mr. Roth said the approved plan can be implemented anytime within 18 months after approval.

Ms. Ansari said she would like to withdraw the application. A copy of the approved minutes will be mailed to Ms. Ansari.

Motion: There was no motion. The Applicant withdrew the application.

HPC-17-38 – 3646 Fels Lane, Ellicott City, HO-979 (continued from June)

Certificate of Approval for exterior alterations.

Applicant: Brianna Sanden

Background & Scope of Work: This property is located in the Ellicott City Historic District. According to SDAT the building dates to 1900. The Applicant seeks approval to construct a deck with a pergola off the northwest side of the house. The deck would be 16 feet wide and 14 feet deep. The deck would be built up against the side door of the house, where there is currently a small concrete walkway leading to the door. The deck will be constructed low to the ground from the side yard, but extend over the sloping area below that contains a granite staircase to the lower yard. The application states that the deck “would be constructed of pressure-treated lumber boards, with the floor boards simply sealed. The rails would be made to match the rails on the front porch, only higher to meet with safety needs.” The Applicant confirmed via email that the railings will be 42 inches high and constructed of wood.

The Applicant also proposes to build a pergola on the rear half of the deck, to be 16 feet wide and 7 feet deep. The application states that “the top boards will be made to match the trim on the front porch, distributed 1 per foot, with two columns distributed at the supporting points out from the house. The columns will also match the columns on the front porch. The entire pergola; columns, railings and roof; will be painted white.”



Figure 33 - Proposed deck and pergola



Figure 35 - Aerial view of property



Figure 34 - Aerial view of property



Figure 36 - Existing porch railings



Figure 37 - Location of deck and pergola

Staff Comments: The proposed deck does not comply with the Guidelines. Chapter 7.B of the Guidelines states, “decks should not be added to a historic building’s primary façade or a façade highly visible from a public way...and should be related in detail as much as possible to the style and character of the building.” This chapter states that the Guidelines for building additions are also applicable for new decks. Chapter 7.A explains, “typically, the primary view of a building is its front façade. However, Ellicott City’s hilly topography and winding streets often provide prominent views of a building’s rooftop, side or rear elevations as well as the front façade. When designing an addition, all views of the building should be considered.” The side of the house is highly visible and is the first view of the house as one comes down Fels Lane. Staff finds the proposed deck and pergola are not related to the style and architecture of the house. The proposed location is not appropriate for this proposal and it is not common, if at all found, to see a deck in such a prominent location. It would be more typical to see the

porch continued around the side of the house, although on Fels Lane front porches are a highly characteristic building feature.

The proposed deck would start at the top of the granite staircase, visible in Figure 38 below. The deck would extend out over the historic granite staircase and lower portion of the yard. The rendering in Figure 33 above, shows a gap in the railing where a staircase could be located. The Figure 33 rendering does not show a railing coming off the side door, which would be required to avoid a fall hazard down the staircase. However, the rendering in Figure 40, below, does not show the staircase. The Applicant has stated that they would like to construct the staircase, but the contractor was not sure that would be a good location for the stairs. The Applicant would like the option to add the stairs later if determined that it will work. If the Commission approves this project, Staff finds the stairs should come back to the Minor Alterations agenda for approval of the design.



Figure 38 - Location of deck

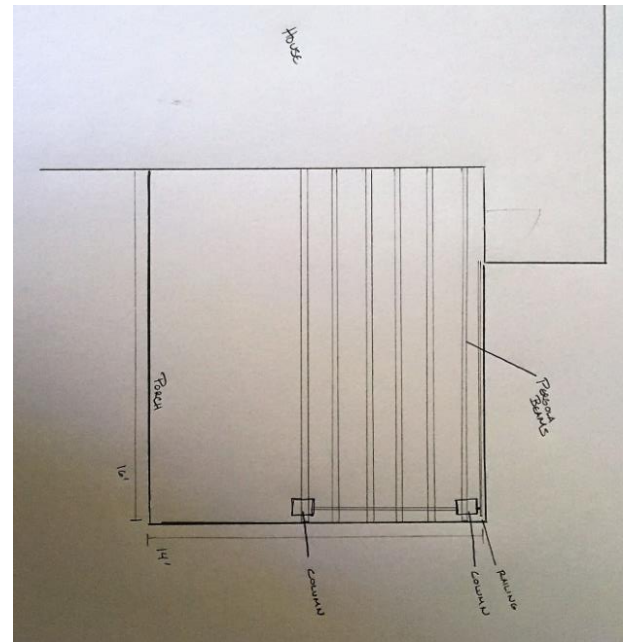


Figure 39 - Pergola truss birds eye view



Figure 40 - Side view of deck and pergola



Figure 41 - View of proposed deck from lower yard

The proposed white railings and columns that would match those on the historic porch do comply with the Guidelines. However, the proposed pressure treated lumber deck does not comply with the Guidelines. Chapter 7.C recommends, “on historic buildings, construct porches of painted wood rather than poured concrete, metal or unpainted wood. Use stained or unpainted wood only for less visible features of a new porch, such as the decking or step treads on the rear of a building in a location not facing or highly visible from a public way.” The proposed deck will be highly visible from the public right of way and pressure treated lumber is not appropriate. Moreover, painting the proposed deck to simply comply with the Guideline is not appropriate either because it will still read as a deck tacked on to a prominent side of the house, rather than a carefully designed, historically and architecturally compatible addition.

Staff recommended the Applicant consider a stone or brick paver patio in the side yard in front of the granite staircase, as the original rendering appeared to have the deck sitting on the ground. Staff also recommended the Applicant consider moving the deck and pergola to the lower level, where it would not be adjacent to the primary facade and so highly visible from the public way. The Applicant responded:

Yes, I understand that the deck is not the most ideal option, but putting in a stone patio would actually take away the slope of the hill right there, which is super useful during flooding, as it funnels the water away from my foundation. I wanted to keep the slope intact, to help with water drainage toward the creek, rather than my back porch.

Another reason is that I have an issue with digger bees, as that slope is the one area in my yard that gets good, continuous sunlight, and the bees go crazy making their nests there. Since I'm allergic to bees, I want to make the deck above this slope, to keep it shaded, and keep the soil moist enough to keep the bees out.

Staff finds a properly constructed pitched patio could still funnel water away from the foundation, if constructed properly. While Staff originally recommended a patio at the top of the stairs (which is where Staff thought the project location was), a terraced patio could also be constructed at the bottom of the historic granite steps, or the deck could project out from that point as well. Staff recommends against constructing the deck over the granite steps, which would hide a historic landscape feature. The area would still function for proper drainage with a patio, if it was constructed properly. By placing a patio or decking at the bottom of the granite staircase, the deck and pergola are no longer visible from the front façade and public right of way, and the proposal would comply with the Guidelines. Additionally, if the granite steps needed to be reset, that work would most likely qualify for the 25% Historic Property Tax Credit, as the granite steps appear to be a historic landscape feature.



Figure 42 - Suggested patio/terracing options

The proposal as submitted does not comply with the Guidelines and the construction of a deck and pergola in this location would detract from the architectural integrity of the house and neighboring historic homes. Furthermore, if there is a bee or yellow jacket problem, the construction of a deck would not prohibit them from surviving in the ground. An exterminator may be necessary to remove a ground hive.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends the Applicant withdraw the current application and submit a new proposal for a stone patio or a lower deck that is in keeping with the Ellicott City Design Guidelines. Otherwise, Staff recommends Denial of the application as submitted, in which case the Applicant cannot return for one year for the same or similar design.

Testimony: Please see testimony under HPC-17-46 below.

Motion: There was no motion. Ms. Sanden withdrew the application.

HPC-17-46 – 3646 Fels Lane, Ellicott City, HO-979

Certificate of Approval for exterior alterations.

Applicant: Brianna Sanden

Background & Scope of Work: This property is located in the Ellicott City Historic District. According to SDAT the building dates to 1900. The Applicant seeks retroactive approval for the construction of a patio. There is currently a Zoning Violation on this property because the patio was constructed without HPC approval. The patio was constructed in the side yard and is 9 feet 6 inches wide by 12 feet long. The Applicant used 12x12 inch grey concrete pavers for the patio floor. Granite rocks from the foundation of the previously existing house were moved and arranged around the patio. A bed of mulch surrounds the patio.



Figure 43 - Existing view of patio



Figure 44 - Concrete patio pavers



Figure 45 - Existing view of patio



Figure 46 - Patio under construction

Staff Comments: Chapter 9.D recommends, “construct new site features using materials compatible with the setting and with nearby historic structures, particularly for features visible from a public way” and “construct new terraces or patios visible from a public way from brick, stone or concrete pavers designed to look like indigenous stone.” The gray concrete pavers that were used do not resemble granite, which is a common feature visible from the street. Due to the amount of natural granite found on this site, a fake material will noticeably stand out. Staff recommends a natural stone be used for the paving material. There is a very unfinished look surrounding the patio as there is a lack of edging material used around the mulched beds and the stacked foundation stones. There is also a different style of paver just outside of the rectangular patio on a bed of pea gravel. There are too many different materials being used, and only the granite foundation stones are a compatible material with the historic character of the area.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends Denial of the patio as constructed, but finds a new plan that has a finished look, appropriate pavers and edging materials could be considered.



Figure 47 - View of area in 2011

Testimony: Ms. Brianna Sanden was previously sworn in. Mr. Shad asked if there were any additions or corrections to the Staff comments or application. Ms. Sanden said the side deck was to provide shade to an area of her yard with constant sun which resulted in digger bee nests. The Applicant stated she is allergic to bees and all biting insects. She said that shading the area with a deck instead of a stone patio will help with the problem. Ms. Sanden said the pergola was to break up a large expansive wall on the side of the house. Ms. Sanden understands the reason against the deck, since it would look too new for the historic surroundings.

Ms. Sanden said there was a concrete foundation from an old house on her property which she decided to turn into a patio. The outside of the foundation consisted of large granite stones. The original intention was to use pea gravel, but due to potential movement of the material in a flood prone area, concrete pavers would be better. She thought using the same material of concrete over concrete would not require approval.

If the wood porch is not approved, Ms. Sanden would like to submit a different plan which does not include a deck or patio covering that section, but rather a different part of the lawn that is already concrete from when it was the foundation for the other house. Ms. Sanden said the portion of her yard where she proposed the deck funneled all the water down to the creek, away from the house during the July 2016 flood. Ms. Sanden rather not level off the area if possible.

Ms. Sanden understood that the Commission usually does not approve concrete pavers, but she said the entire retaining wall that borders the sidewalk along the foundation of the old house is all concrete and she wanted to match the material. She said that it is not a highly visible area from the public way. She thought approval was not needed for replacement of the same materials.

Ms. Burgess asked why Ms. Sanden did not seek approval even though she lives in the historic district. Ms. Sanden said her neighbor was a former HPC Commissioner and he had said maintenance or replacement of in-kind materials does not need approval. Ms. Sanden said the pavers were not part of her original design, since she wanted pea gravel, and she thought it was considered maintenance with no approval required. Ms. Holmes referenced a photo and said if the Applicant was repairing the retaining wall with fallen stones, it would be maintenance. However, the seat wall that was built recently was not original, nor were the pavers. Ms. Sanden said the seat wall was not in her original design plan. Her landscaper thought it would look nice and then installed it, but Ms. Sanden said she can take down the seat wall. Mr. Reich asked if the seat stones are mortared. Ms. Sanden said no, they are stacked. Ms. Burgess asked if they were intended to be there. Ms. Sanden said the landscaper intended for the stones to be there but she will remove them.

Mr. Reich referenced last month's case of 3802 Church Road, in which a side patio with gray concrete pavers and a flagstone border was approved. Mr. Reich said he drove by the property and it looked nice and he could not tell the stones were concrete. Ms. Zoren said the pavers approved for Church Road came in various sizes and had a tumbled look that resembled cobblestones and did not look the same as the 12x12 pavers presented in this case. The Commission liked the seat stones, since it incorporated the architectural ruins that existed on the property. However, the Commission agreed with the Staff's recommendations against the side deck and pergola, since they would be out of place within the historic district and would ruin the view on Fels Lane.

Mr. Reich recommended moving the deck to the downhill area between the rear porch and granite steps. Ms. Sanden said that area funneled water away from the house especially during last July's flood

and she would like to keep the area as is. Mr. Reich said the area can still be graded to install a deck/patio and drainages to control water flow. Ms. Sanden said she plans to landscape the area.

Ms. Tennor said the deck installation may not resolve the digger bee issue. Ms. Zoren said bees frequently nest below the underside of a deck. Ms. Tennor said the “digger bee” is not a species but the actual name of the bees that Ms. Sanden has referenced is called brown wasp. Ms. Tennor recommended landscaping the area where the pergola was originally proposed to naturally break up the continuous wall on the side of the house.

Ms. Sanden said she wants to withdraw the application for the wood side deck but keep the application for the stone patio. The Commission indicated they would not approve the current patio material and the Applicant withdrew the application in order to identify a more appropriate paving material.

Motion: There was no motion. Ms. Sanden withdrew the application.

OTHER BUSINESS

Ms. Holmes provided the meeting agendas for the Ellicott City Master Plan (ECMP)-preservation meeting to the Commissioners. Mr. Reich requested for discussion of the ECMP at next month’s meeting. Ms. Holmes said she will add it to August meeting agenda.

Ms. Tennor moved to adjourn. Mr. Roth seconded. The motion was unanimously approved and the meeting was adjourned at 10:03 p.m.

*Chapter and page references are from the Ellicott City or Lawyers Hill Historic District Design Guidelines.

Allan Shad, Chair

Beth Burgess, Executive Secretary

Samantha Holmes, Preservation Planner

Yvette Zhou, Recording Secretary